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United States Senate

May 11, 2017

The Honorable David Shulkin
Secretary
United States Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shulkin:

I am writing to request more complete information in light of your statement that over 1,100 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities nationwide could be closed and recent news suggesting that hiring restrictions have been placed on over 4,000 VA positions, despite the federal hiring freeze being lifted.

Indiana is home to nearly 550,000 veterans, many of whom depend on VA facilities in Indiana and neighboring states to receive the health care they need. Over 52,000 Hoosiers depend on disability compensation or pension payments from the VA in order to provide for themselves and their families.

I am concerned that leaving positions unfilled and closing VA facilities will have a negative effect on the care and benefits VA provides to our nation's veterans. I worry that these actions could significantly delay Hoosier veterans' access to health care and the speed at which disability claims are resolved. It is important that we keep our promise to our veterans by making sure VA is able to provide the care and benefits that they have earned.

I respectfully request that you provide me with further information on whether any of the 1,100 facilities proposed for closure or the 4,000 jobs that may remain unfilled are located in Indiana or in facilities in surrounding states that serve a significant number of Hoosier veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Donnelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" and last name "Donnelly" clearly distinguishable.

Joe Donnelly
United States Senator